

Enough is Enough

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For my ninja on his birthday. This one shot delves into Naruto's thoughts as he once again finds himself facing off against his best friend.

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Disclaimer : Kishimoto-sensei owns Naruto.

A/N: For my number one man on his birthday. I hope this one shot lives up to the amazing, life-changing story that is Naruto as it races towards the finish line. I grew up with this story. I started when I was on the verge of adolescence and it took me into adult hood. I have learned so much about myself and have faced every challenge with the determination to never give up. I have no doubt I will continue to read and watch it until the day I die. I also want to pay my respect and gratitude to the mastermind behind it all. I would not be the writer I am if not for Kishimoto who, oddly enough, thinks a lot like I do just more mature and practiced. So in honor of Kishi and Naruto as we head towards the last chapter I present this one shot in Naruto's point of view as he listens to Sasuke's reasons for why he is doing what he is.

This place sure brings back some memories, he couldn't help thinking as he once again stood on the First Hokage's statue facing Sasuke. Sasuke, his best friend. Sasuke, his brother. The first person to acknowledge his existence, to know what it was like to feel the same pain he had experienced most of his life. The man he had fought alongside of. Yet here they were, squaring off, again. He couldn't help but sigh in frustration. This was beyond ridiculous, just as it had been back then.

Being back in the Valley of the End, Naruto couldn't help comparing who he was the last time he had been here and who he was now. He was no longer the rash, noisy dropout who would yell every time something did not go his way and rush into danger without thinking first. He had learned his lesson, after having it beat into his head repeatedly anyway, and this time he would handle the situation differently. He would not fail.

Naruto still regretted not being able to save his friend, but even as he listened to Sasuke's reasons for what he planned to do, which included getting rid of him, he couldn't give up hope of reaching him. He refused to kill him. He knew that the Sasuke he had made a bond with was still in there, lost in the darkness. Neither of them would die today.

Itachi had died believing he could leave everything, the war, Sasuke and the future, to Naruto and he would not let him down. He wouldn't let Itachi's sacrifice be in vain now that he fully understood the man he had been and what he had done for the Konoha and the Country of Fire but Sasuke still didn't get it.

He said he believed that Itachi had been the ideal Hokage that the Hokage didn't have to be loved. He was the one that protected the village from within the shadows, within the darkness. Naruto shook his head. How could someone so smart be so dense? Itachi himself had said that the Hokage didn't become Hokage because he made the villagers admire him, but that it was the one who was admired by the villagers who became Hokage. You couldn't have one without the other.

Sasuke's "revolution" was no better than what Nagato or Obito or Madara had had in mind. This was not the answer to solving the chaotic world that they lived in. If they wanted to forge ahead they had to do it together, all of them. One person deciding the fates of millions was unfair, not to mention insane.

All Sasuke's plan would result in is more war, more death, more chaos. That is not the world Naruto wanted to live in, to be a part of. That was not the world so many had died for. It was not the world his parents, sensei, Nagato, Yahiko, Konan, Itachi, Neji, Inoichi, Shikaku, Asuma-sensei, and the Third had given their lives for. He would not let their dreams of peace die just because Sasuke wanted to turn the world into something that would please him even if it destroyed so many others.

Enough was enough. Naruto was sick of this history repeating itself crap. He was not Asura and Sasuke was not Indra. Nor was he the First Hokage and Sasuke was Madara. They were not defined by their dead predecessors nor would he forget what had happened in the past. Severing their ties with the past like Sasuke was proposing was insane.

The past helped one grow and learn from their mistakes as well as others. Erase all of what had come before and you will just make the same mistakes and we would end up where we were right now.

Naruto was not going to erase the past; he was going to break this never ending cycle of hatred here and now. No more bullshit about shinobi being cursed. No more brothers fighting brothers. He was going to knock some sense into Sasuke here and now. He wasn't the same brat he was five years ago. This time he wasn't going to lose. He was going to drag Sasuke's ass back, wake everyone up, and go home. He would never, ever give up.

A/N: And there you go. Short, sweet, and to the point. I still cannot believe we are almost done. Thank you so much Kishi, I cannot wait for your next story and thank you my #1 ninja. Happy birthday Naruto! I know you will set everything right. Never give up.